IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently amended) A method of manufacturing a ceramic honeycomb body so constructed that cells are alternately sealed at one but not both end surfaces of the body by filling a sealing slurry into predetermined cells at both end surfaces of a ceramic honeycomb formed body and sintering the ceramic honeycomb formed body, comprising the steps of:

forming a mask for respective ceramic honeycomb formed bodies by arranging a sheet on an end surface of the ceramic honeycomb formed body and piercing holes in the sheet at positions corresponding to the predetermined cells;

immersing an end portion of the ceramic honeycomb formed body to which the mask is arranged into the sealing slurry; and

filling the sealing slurry into the cells through the holes pierced in the mask in a quantity sufficient to seal the filled cells, wherein the piercing step of the sheet arranged at the end surface of the ceramic honeycomb formed body is performed respectively for sub-blocks obtained by dividing the cells at the end surface into sub regions.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Original) The method of manufacturing ceramic bodies according to claim 1, wherein the piercing step of the sheet arranged at the end surface of the ceramic honeycomb formed body is performed by using a laser.

4. (Original) The method of manufacturing ceramic bodies according to claim 1, wherein a diameter of the hole pierced in the sheet is set in such a manner that the hole has an area of 30-70% of an area of respective cells.

5. (Original) The method of manufacturing ceramic bodies according to claim 1, wherein positions of the cells are detected by means of an image processing process.

6. (Original) The method of manufacturing ceramic bodies according to claim 1, wherein the piercing step of the sheet arranged at the end surface of the ceramic honeycomb formed body is performed by using one needle or a pinholder having needles at positions corresponding to the cells to be sealed of the ceramic honeycomb formed body.